Government does not earn the profit. It facilitates the exports to boost the exports. However, in the year 2008-09 (April-December), 145.09 million kgs of tea was exported earning a foreign exchange equivalent to Rs.1786.58 crores (estimated).

E-auction of tea

†259. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Tea Board has recently announced e-auction (auction through internet);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the export of tea is likely to be enhanced; and

(d) whether existing auction centres will be affected from e-auction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) The re-designed E-auction system for tea has been inaugurated at the following centers:-

Auction Centres	Inauguration date
Kolkata tea auction centre	19.11.2008
Guwahati tea auction centre	08.12.2008
Siliguri tea auction centre	13.12.2008
Coimbatore tea auction centre	20.12.2008
Cochin tea auction Centre	20.12.2008
Coonoor tea auction centre	21.12.2008

(c) The re-designed e-auction system will reduce transaction time and cost which in turn may increase exports.

(d) The re-designed E-auction system will replace the existing manual tea auction system.

FDI in aviation sector

260. SHRI DHARAM PAL SABHARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) is considering a proposal to raise FDI in aviation sector;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for considering such a proposal in view of 26/11 Mumbai terror attack;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.